

English Level 1

Teacher's Notes

Section C

Being a skilful speaker and listener

1 Taking part in an informal discussion

2 Taking part in a formal discussion

General guidance on assessing Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening self-assessment grid (for teachers to distribute as required)

English Level 1

Geoff Barton, Clare Constant, Kim Richardson, Keith Washington

Section C: Being a skilful speaker and listener

Use these free pilot resources to help build your learners' skill base

We are delighted to continue to make available our free pilot learner resources and teacher notes, to help teach the skills learners need to pass Edexcel FS English, Level 1.

But use the accredited exam material and other resources to prepare them for the real assessment

We developed these materials for the pilot assessment and standards and have now matched them to the final specification in the table below. They'll be a useful interim measure to get you started but the assessment guidance should no longer be used and you should make sure you use the accredited assessments to prepare your learners for the actual assessment.

New resources available for further support

We're also making available new learner and teacher resources that are completely matched to the final specification and assessment – and also providing access to banks of the actual live papers as these become available. We recommend that you switch to using these as they become available.

Coverage of accredited specification and standards

The table below shows the match of the accredited specification to the unit of pilot resources. This table supersedes the pilot table within the teacher notes.

Skills Standard	Coverage and Range	Learner Unit
1 Speaking, listening and communication Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects	1.1 Make relevant and extended contributions to discussions, allowing for and responding to others' input	C1 Taking part in an informal discussion C2 Taking part in a formal discussion
	1.2 Prepare for and contribute to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions	
	1.3 Make different kinds of contributions to discussions	
	1.4 Present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language	

Where to find the final specification, assessment and resource material

Visit our website www.edexcel.com/fs then:

- **for the specification and assessments:** under **Subjects**, click on **English (Levels 1–2)**
- **for information about resources:** under **Support**, click on **Published resources**.

Skill Standard	Coverage and Range	Units
L1.1 Take full part in formal and informal discussions/exchanges	<p>L1.1.1 make relevant contributions to discussions, responding appropriately to others</p> <p>L1.1.3 be flexible in discussion, making different kinds of contributions</p> <p>L1.1.4 present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language</p>	1 Taking part in an informal discussion
	<p>L1.1.2 be flexible in discussion, making different kinds of contributions</p> <p>L1.1.3 be flexible in discussion, making different kinds of contributions</p> <p>L1.1.4 present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language</p>	2 Taking part in a formal discussion

Approaches to teaching

Each unit begins with a brief explanation of the speaking and listening skills being taught. Then learners take part in a short activity that has been designed to require the use of similar skills to those being taught and developed during the unit. They are asked to rate their skills using a continuum so that they can identify what they can already do and focus on those areas which they need to develop more as they work through the rest of the unit. At this point it is important to encourage learners to make use of the full range of grades on the continuum and to consider where they should be placed for each skill. Asking them to work with a partner to justify the relative positions they have given themselves for each skill should help them think more carefully about how they see themselves and what they need to work on most.

The **Improve Your Skills** section guides learners through a series of steps helping them to develop a strategy and learn the skills needed to do well in the speaking and listening situations they will meet in real life and be assessed in as part of this course, i.e. taking part in an informal and formal discussion.

The inclusion of **Make the skills your own** in the Teacher's File aims to provide real-life scenarios for learners to practise and consolidate the skills learned in a unit. To make the most of them, talk through how the task requires the use of the skill just learned and set a deadline by which learners will give you the evidence they have done the task(s) allocated to them. Ask your learners to suggest other real-life situations where the new skills may be useful.

1 Taking part in an informal discussion

It is important that learners realise that discussions they have outside class, at home etc. are informal discussions of the kind being assessed in this unit. In the classroom situation learners may be much more reticent than they need to be; constant practice and exposure to small, stepped speaking and listening activities will help. Listening to audio clips of discussions from BBC radio, or watching clips, for example from post-match discussions in *Match of the Day* or TV 'soaps', will benefit learners, providing models of interaction and the type of language used. Clips can also be played with the sound down to focus on body language and gestures.

Make the skills your own Before asking learners to begin the task in this unit ask them to suggest real life situations where people take part in an informal discussion, e.g. *when deciding where to go on a group holiday*.

Build on the skills you already have

Learners should be given a time limit of five minutes to complete this task. Alternatively, the activity can be modified into a 'fishbowl' activity where pairs take it in turns to observe each other and comment on the skills they notice.

Improve your skills

This section provides a generic series of steps learners can follow to help them perform well during any informal group discussion. It is important that they remember the purpose of their talk and keep to time.

Providing them with a clearly visible clock and asking them to appoint someone to remind the group of how long they have left will help them to retain their sense of purpose.

Step 2 'Listening actively' It may be useful to use clips from TV that show poor and good listening skills which can form the basis for discussion of what makes a good listener.

Step 3 Depending on learners' needs and confidence in speaking, it may be useful to know what they can say, e.g. to interrupt, to check if they are not clear or want more information, agree and support others' views and disagree politely. Alternatively, provide a worksheet with some useful phrases which learners can discuss in pairs and match to the categories above, adding other phrases they have used or heard in discussions.

Learners will benefit from lots of short discussion activities where they can practise ways of expressing their views, agreeing and disagreeing, interrupting to check and clarify and developing arguments to support their point of view.

2 Taking part in a formal discussion

In this unit learners learn the skills needed to play a full part in a formal discussion. It is important that learners have the opportunity to see how people can make effective contributions to discussions and it may be useful to use video clips from programmes such as *Question Time* or *Newsnight* where a broadcaster discusses an issue with experts who hold differing views. Learners should be encouraged to focus on both speaking and listening skills – what works well and what doesn't – and the different roles that speakers play.

Make the skills your own Before asking learners to begin the task in this unit, ask them to suggest real life situations where people are be asked to take part in a formal discussion, e.g.

- when on a committee organising an event
- at an interview.

Ensure that learners understand the difference between informal and formal discussions. In pairs, they could discuss whether the following features relate more to formal or informal discussions:

- people avoid slang and other colloquial language
- the discussion happens on the spur of the moment
- people prepare what they have to say
- there is a set 'agenda' or list of items to cover
- the discussion can go in many different directions

- people know each other quite well
- some action will be taken as a result of the discussion
- the discussion is planned in advance.

Build on the skills you already have

Encourage learners to treat this as a formal discussion – perhaps by imagining that they are being assessed as part of an interview for a job on the local council.

Improve your skills

Learners work through a series of generic steps that they can use to prepare for and practise any formal discussion they are asked to take part in.

Step 1 provides learners with the opportunity to practise and refine their planning and research skills. Learners should be aware that if they are to attend a meeting they should know what the purpose of the meeting is; think about their ideas and do relevant research in advance; bring relevant information to the meeting; and be aware of the order in which points are going to be discussed, perhaps by reading an agenda.

Step 2 breaks down the speaking and listening skills into manageable steps before getting learners to embark on the full discussion. Ensure that contributions during the meeting are clearly expressed, and that learners show active listening skills by asking questions and seeking clarification when appropriate. Using a video or audio recorder can be a useful tool to help learners to become aware of what they do when they take part in a discussion.

For the final meeting one person needs to chair the meeting. This role can be carried out by the teacher or by a more confident learner.

Level 1

Section C

Being a skilful speaker and listener

General guidance on assessing Speaking and Listening

The Speaking and Listening component of Functional English is internally assessed. This allows centres to tailor the assessment activities to suit different learner groups and circumstances within the centre. It is essential, though, to ensure that the activities chosen allow opportunities for the learners to meet the assessment requirements of the Functional Skills standards. The activities suggested in the learner materials have been selected to provide some guidance in choosing appropriate assessment activities though they are by no means prescriptive.

At Level 1, the assessment of Speaking and Listening consists of two discussion activities, one formal and one informal. A formal exchange or discussion is one that has been pre-planned, which the candidate has prepared for. It is likely to take place as part of a programme of learning or in a workplace situation. It could also be at a meeting in any context. An informal exchange or discussion is not pre-planned and the participants are likely to be familiar to each other.

Other things to consider include the following:

- Organise the activities to allow ample time for learners to prepare and to practise their skills before being formally assessed.
- Use existing curriculum or extra-curricular activities, where appropriate, as opportunities to develop and/or assess Speaking and Listening skills.
- Select discussion groups and audiences for presentations which will support but also challenge individual learners.
- Select suitable topics for discussion and presentation which will engage learners but also provide an appropriate level of challenge. You may need a variety of different topics if you are working with a large class.

- Help to structure and focus the discussion by adopting a role such as Chair, minute-taker or customer/client.
- To develop speaking and listening skills, it is a good idea to make video recordings of discussions and presentations to help learners evaluate their own performance. Peer observation is another useful technique.

Edexcel has produced an assessment document for you to record learner achievement in Speaking and Listening. It is available from Edexcel; page 6 has a student-friendly version of that document. In order to achieve Level 1, learners must have achieved, over the two assessment activities, all of the Level 1 criteria. The centre assesses whether Level 1 has been achieved and provides a summative comment to explain how the criteria have been met.

Speaking and Listening self-assessment grid

Use the grid below to measure how you performed in the Speaking and Listening test. This is a learning and teaching tool to aid preparation for the assessment and does **not** form part of the formal assessment process. This can be used to support all the activities in Section C.

Assessment Criteria	What you are aiming for	How did you do?
	To achieve a Level 1 pass your performance should match most of these.	You can fill this in yourself or get someone else to complete it for you.
■ makes relevant contributions to discussions	You listen to others and try to understand their ideas and opinions. Your own comments or questions link clearly to the subject you are discussing and to what others have said.	
■ responds appropriately to others	You show you are listening through, for example, body language, facial expressions and questions. You respect the rights of others to speak and to hold opposing views to yours and use appropriate phrases for interruption.	
■ preparation supports contribution to formal discussion	You prepare beforehand, for example by researching relevant information or by being aware of the material to be covered, so that you have a good understanding of the subject yourself.	
■ adapts contribution to informal and formal contexts	You alter your choice of words, volume and tone of voice to suit the context, for example the age, level of confidence, ability and knowledge of other people taking part and the type and purpose of the discussion.	
■ is flexible within discussion making different types of contribution	You take part in the discussion not only by presenting your own ideas and information but also by listening attentively when others are speaking, asking questions, encouraging and supporting others, or helping the group decide what to do next.	
■ presents information /points of view clearly	You express yourself clearly, logically and in detail, giving reasons and supporting evidence for your opinions.	
■ uses appropriate language	You speak in a way that others can understand and choose the right language for the occasion by, for example, avoiding slang terms which might not be understood by everyone.	

In this section of your learner materials, we are focusing on your ability to take a full part in formal and informal discussions. This includes contributing in relevant ways and responding appropriately to others. You should be able to present information and points of view clearly and in language appropriate to the situation. When you have filled in the right-hand column of the grid above, try to work out which are your weaker areas and look back at the relevant sections in the learner materials for more help with them.